

FRIDAY SERMON

19 July 2013

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

After reciting the *Tashahhud*, the *Ta'uz* and the first chapter *Al Fatiha* of the Holy Quran Imam Zafrullah Domun read verse 186 of chapter *Al Baqara* and then he gave its translation as follows:

“The month of Ramadan is that in which the Qur’an was sent down as a guidance for mankind with clear proofs of guidance and discrimination. Therefore, whosoever of you is present *at home* in this month, let him fast therein. But whoso is sick or is on a journey, *shall fast* the same number of other days. Allah desires *to give* you facility and He desires not hardship for you, and that you may complete the number, and that you may exalt Allah for His having guided you and that you may be grateful.” (2:186)

As I said in a previous sermon the month of Ramadan has a particular relationship with the Holy Quran. We know from reliable Hadiths that the Holy Prophet Mohammad (saw) started receiving the revelation of the Holy Book in the year 610AD. He was meditating in the cave Hira and the angel Jibril appeared to him and revealed to him the first five verses of Sura Al qalam(Ch 96). The exact date of this event seems to be the 24th as reported by Ahmad & Jarir. So it started during the last ten days of the month of Ramadan of that year. In the above verse mention is made that it was in this month that the Holy Quran was revealed. We should understand that the beginning of the revelation took place in Ramadan and since we learn from the hadiths that Jibril came to make the Holy Prophet(saw) recite portion of the Quran that had been revealed till then in each succeeding year till the Holy Prophet's death, we can fairly say that the Holy Quran was revealed in that month. Then in the verse we are told some specific characteristics of this book. It is first a “guidance for mankind”. We will note when we read the book that it has given us detailed guidance concerning almost all aspects of our life. Without making an exhaustive list, we may say that it speaks about marriage, children, wealth, poverty, inheritance, economics, lessons from history, development of men, meaning of life, how we should behave towards one another, who we can marry and who we cannot, what happens after death, paradise, hell, God himself etc etc. It is only by repeatedly reading the book that one can keep in mind all the subject matter on which Allah speaks about in the Holy Quran. On some of these matters Allah has given us detailed guidance as for example inheritance, who we can and who we cannot marry, what is good for us to eat and what not but on others Allah has remained silent leaving it to us to decide in the light of the teachings given and through the example of the Holy Prophet (saw). The Holy Quran has been qualified as the “*Furqaan*” meaning that which helps to distinguish between two or several things, that which is the decisive factor. Hence the Holy Quran is the criterion to judge anything whether it is good or bad whether it should be done or it should be avoided. In fact this is one aspect of the Holy Book which has been understood since the beginning and which helped to make the Muslim culture and civilization flourish. Hence for the Muslim all the guidance that he needs is

found in the Holy Quran. To emphasize this point to Hazrat Masih Maood (as) , Allah revealed to him “ *Al khayro koullouhou fihil Quran*” meaning “ everything good that can be conceived of is found in the Holy Quran.

Since Islam came into the world its opponents have tried to poke fun at its teachings but there are non-Muslims who have studied this Holy Book and they have marveled at its grandeur. One such person is Goethe who is considered among one of the greatest Germans. He is considered a genius and he said:

“However often we turn to it [the Quran] at first disgusting us each time afresh, it soon attracts, astounds, and in the end enforces our reverence...Its style, in accordance with its contents and aim is stern, grand, terrible – ever and anon truly sublime – Thus this book will go on exercising through all ages a most potent influence.”

In fact one can easily understand the influence of this book when we see that the number of Muslims in the world has gone on increasing since the time of the Holy Prophet (saw). Although some Muslims may be lax in following all its teachings yet almost all know that it is an important book.

Speaking of modern day scientific knowledge and the Holy Quran, a French surgeon studied Arabic and studied the Holy Quran and wrote a book known as “**The Quran and Modern Science**” and he said :

“A totally objective examination of it [the Quran] in the light of modern knowledge, leads us to recognize the agreement between the two, as has been already noted on repeated occasions, It makes us deem it quite unthinkable for a man of Mohammed’s time to have been the author of such statements on account of the state of knowledge in his day. Such considerations are part of what gives the Quranic Revelation its unique place, and forces the impartial scientist to admit his inability to provide an explanation which call solely upon materialistic reasoning.”
(P18)

My aim in giving these two quotations is that young Muslims should reflect on them and understand that Allah has given them a great book that can guide them in all aspects of their life if they study it with an open mind. They will learn to reflect and cultivate a broad view of things rather than just be content to defer to authorities. There are plenty of verses where Allah calls upon the Muslims to reflect. So it is this great source of guidance that has a deep connection with the month of Ramadan. Hence it is our duty to motivate ourselves to read , to study and to reflect upon the noble teachings of this Holy Book in this Holy month of Ramadan. We should see to it that at night or even in the morning or during the day we should read and reflect upon a portion of the Holy Quran everyday.

Another point that is mentioned in the verse that is under discussion is “*Yoridullaho bekamoul yousra wa laa yorido bekamoul usra*” meaning “Allah desires facility for you and He does not

desire any difficulty for you". Definitely when we fast, because of lack of food and drink we become a bit weak especially at the end of the day. Fortunately for us in Mauritius we are enjoying a very mild weather but elsewhere in Europe, Asia and the USA it is very hot. Despite all the swings in the weather the majority of Muslims try and are able to fast in conformity with Allah's instructions. But Allah makes it clear that Allah does not want to put us in difficulty. He desires ease for us. So if anyone has any problem and this fast becomes a source of difficulty for him, he or she may not fast and follow Allah's instructions giving alms or replacing the fast when he or she is better. This portion of the verse also reminds all those who hold authority that they should always make things easy for the people and not make them difficult. In addition in this verse we also learn that the days of fasting should be completed and in them we should aim at glorifying Allah as best as we can and we should show ourselves thankful to Him. So we should be using most of our time after looking about our daily tasks to glorifying Allah and to develop a deep sense of thankfulness to Him. In Ramadan Allah gives us an opportunity to stop sinning and to try to efface all our previous sins. It is a unique moment. Once we meet it we should do our best to make the most of it and we are thankful to Allah that He has cast His glance of Mercy upon us by keeping us alive in this month full of great blessings. We do our best to glorify Him by being thankful to Him. Just imagine how you would have spent your Ramadan if you knew that it was the last one of your life. Just take a few minutes before you sleep tonight and imagine that this is the last Ramadan that Allah has given you to fast. If we knew such a thing we would have been very careful with our fast and what we do in it. Fortunately for us Allah has kept this knowledge hidden from us and so we do not bother about it. But since this knowledge has been kept hidden from us, it is incumbent upon us to treat each Ramadan as the last one of our life and do our best to extract the maximum benefit from it.

If you read the Holy Quran you will see how much emphasis has been laid on the fact that we should spend our life here in such a way that Allah forgives us all our sins and He admits us into His Paradise. If we fail in this matter we would have failed our life. Just imagine how serious this matter is. We should give it the consideration that it merits. May Allah help all of us to understand what is demanded from us and may He help us to accomplish it.

From an article in an encyclopedia I have recently read that there are some memorable events that took place in the month of Ramadan. I want to share them with you. The first is the birth of Hussein, grandson of the Holy Prophet (saw) who was martyred at Kerbala who was born on 6th Ramadan. The second one is the death of Hazrat Khadija, first wife of the Holy prophet (saw) who died on the 10th. Then there is the victory of the battle of Badr which took place on the 17th which this year will fall on 26th July, next Friday. I do not know how many amongst you are aware that the spiritual leader of the Egyptian Muslim brotherhood whose name is Mohammed Badie has told protesters against the ouster of president Mohammed Morsi that they may break the fast of Ramadan, since they were in a "state of jihad" and would soon wage a battle for control of Egypt. They are preparing for the second battle of Badr to free Egypt on next Friday. It might seem insignificant to give this date. But one can easily judge how important it is to relate events of today to that great battle that took place in 624AD. On the 19th of Ramadan the early Muslims made their victorious entry into Mecca in 630AD. The other important dates are the birth and death of Hazrat Ali. He was born on 22nd Ramadan 606AD and he died on 21st Ramadan 661AD.

Since I said last week that we need to engage ourselves in Istighfar a lot during Ramadan, I want to give an extract from the writings of the Promised Messiah(as) where he has explained this matter in detail. He says:

“The true meaning of *Istighfar* is to supplicate God that no human weakness should be manifested and that God might support human nature with His strength and might enclose it in the circle of His help and protection. The root of *Istighfar* is *ghafara*, which means to cover up. Thus, the meaning of *Istighfar* is that God should cover up the natural weakness of the supplicant with His power. This meaning is then enlarged to include the covering up of a sin that has been committed, but the true meaning is that God should safeguard the supplicant against his natural weakness and should bestow upon him power from His power, and knowledge from His knowledge, and light from His light. Having created man, God has not become separated from him, but as He is man’s Creator and the Creator of all his external and internal faculties, He is also All-Sustaining, that is to say, He safeguards with His support everything that He has created. It is, therefore, necessary for man that as he has been created by God, he should seek to safeguard the features of his creation through the All- Sustaining attribute of the Divine....”

For today we will stop here. It is my prayer that Allah helps each one amongst us to do our best worship during this month *incha* Allah.

Announcement:

A friend of ours from Dubai has been generous to send us some gifts from Dubai to be distributed amongst the members. Each family will receive a Ramadan kit in his name. We request you all to pray for him that Allah reward him manifold for his generosity. Please remember him and members of his family in your prayers.